NUMB. XCVIII.

The GUARDIAN.

In ſeſe redit—— Virg.

Friday, July 3. 1713.

THE firſt who undertook to inſtruct the World in ſingle Papers, was *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* of famous Memory. A Man nearly related to the Family of the IRONSIDES. We have often ſmoked a Pipe together, for I was ſo much in his Books, that at his Deceaſe he left me a Silver Standiſh, a pair of Spectacles, and the Lamp by which he uſed to write his Lucubrations.

The venerable *Iſaac* was ſucceeded by a Gentleman of the ſame Family, very memorable for the Shortneſs of his Face and of his Speeches. This Ingenious Author publiſhed his Thoughts, and held his Tongue, with great Applauſe, for two Years together.

I NESTOR IRONSIDE have now for ſome Time undertaken to fill the Place of theſe my two renowned Kinſmen and Predeceſſors. For it is obſerved of every Branch of our Family, that we have all of us a wonderful Inclination to give good Advice, though it is remarked of ſome of us, that we are apt on this occaſion rather to give than take.

However it be, I cannot but obſerve with ſome ſecret Pride, that this way of Writing diurnal Papers has not ſucceeded for any ſpace of Time in any Perſons who are not of our Line. I believe I ſpeak within compaſs, when I affirm that above a hundred different Authors have endeavoured after our Family-way of Writing. Some of which have been Writers in other kinds of the greateſt Eminence in the Kingdom; but I do not know how it has happened, they have none of them hit upon the Art. Their Projects have always dropt after a few unſucceſsful Eſſays. It puts me in mind of a Story which was lately told me by a pleaſant Friend of mine, who has a very fine Hand on the Violin. His Maid Servant ſeeing his Inſtrument lying upon the Table, and being ſenſible there was Muſick in it, if ſhe knew how to fetch it out, drew the Bow over every part of the Strings, and at laſt told her Maſter ſhe had tried the Fiddle all over, but could not for her Heart find whereabout the Tune lay.

But though the whole Burden of ſuch a Paper is only fit to reſt on the Shoulders of a *Bickerſtaff* or an *Ironſide*; there are ſeveral who can acquit themſelves of a ſingle Day's Labour in it with ſuitable Abilities. Theſe are Gentlemen whom I have often invited to this Tryal of Wit, and who have ſeveral of them acquitted themſelves to my private Emolument, as well as to their own Reputation. My Paper among the Republick of Letters is the *Ulyſſes* his Bow, in which every Man of Wit or Learning may try his Strength. One who does not care to write a Book without being ſure of his Abilities, may ſee by this means if his Parts and Talents are to the Publick Taſte.

This I take to be of great Advantage to Men of the beſt Senſe, who are always diffident of their private judgment, till it receives a Sanction from the publick. *Provoco ad Populum*, I appeal to the People, was the uſual Saying of a very excellent Dramatick Poet, when he had any Diſputes with parti-

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particular Perſons about the Juſtneſs and Regularity of his Productions. It is but a melancholy Comfort for an Author to be ſatisfied that he has written up to the Rules of Art, when he finds he has no Admirers in the World beſides himſelf. Common Modeſty ſhould, on this Occaſion, make a Man ſuſpect his own Judgment, and that he miſapplies the Rules of his Art, when he finds himſelf ſingular in the Applauſe which he beſtows upon his own Writings.

The Publick is always Even with an Author who has not a juſt Deference for them. The Contempt is reciprocal. I laugh at every one, ſaid an old Cynick, who laughs at me. Do you ſo? replied the Philoſopher; then let me tell you, you live the merrieſt Life of any Man in *Athens*.

It is not therefore the leaſt Uſe of this my Paper, that it gives a timorous Writer, and ſuch is every good one, an Opportunity of putting his Abilities to the Proof, and of ſounding the Publick before he launches into it. For this Reaſon I look upon my Paper as a kind of Nurſery for Authors, and queſtion not but ſome, who have made a good Figure here, will hereafter flouriſh under their own Names in more long and elaborate Works.

After having thus far inlarged upon this Particular, I have one Favour to beg of the Candid and Courteous Reader, that when he meets with any thing in this Paper which may appear a little dull or heavy, (tho' I hope this will not be often) he will believe it is the Work of ſome other Perſon, and not of NESTOR IRONSIDE.

I have, I know not how, been drawn in to tattle of my ſelf, *more Majorum*, almoſt the length of a whole *Guardian*. I ſhall therefore fill up the remaining Part of it with what ſtill relates to my own Perſon, and my Correſpondents. Now I would have them all know that on the twentieth Inſtant it is my Intention to erect a Lion's Head in Imitation of thoſe I have deſcribed in *Venice*, through which all the private Intelligence of that Commonwealth is ſaid to paſs. This Head is to open a moſt wide and voracious Mouth, which ſhall take in ſuch Letters and Papers as are conveyed to me by my Correſpondents, it being my Reſolution to have a particular Regard to all ſuch Matters as come to my Hands through the Mouth of the Lion. There will be under it a Box, of which the Key will be in my own Cuſtody, to receive ſuch Papers as are dropped into it. Whatever the Lion ſwallows I ſhall digeſt for the Uſe of the Publick. This Head requires ſome Time to finiſh, the Workman being reſolved to give it ſeveral Maſterly Touches, and to repreſent it as Ravenous as poſſible. It will be ſet up in *Button*'s Coffee-houſe in *Covent-Garden*, who is directed to ſhew the Way to the Lion's Head, and to inſtruct any young Author how to convey his Works into the Mouth of it with Safety and Secrecy.

This Paper is to be had of Mr. Yemes *under the* Thatch'd-houſe *Tavern in St.* James's-ſtreet; *Mrs.* Bond *at* Charing-croſs; *Mrs.* Bolter *and Mrs.* Dodd *near the* Temple-gate; *and Mr.* Round *in* Exchange-Ally.

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